



City of Santa Barbara

SIGN PROGRAM INFORMATIONAL HANDOUT

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handout is to serve as a guide to applicants in pursuing a Sign Program for a building or complex that exhibits a common identity. The handout works within the framework of the City Sign Regulations but provides further clarification in the steps necessary to apply for a Sign Program.

A Sign Program is required pursuant to City Ordinance section 22.70.040, under section A.2.c,

“An office complex which maintains a group identity shall submit to the Sign Committee a Sign Program for all signs proposed within the complex. Upon approval, the Sign Program shall apply to all tenants. This Sign Program shall be included as a provision in the lease for each individual tenant. Proof of said inclusion in the standard lease for the office complex shall be submitted to the Planning Division by the lessor.”

Or Section A.3.b.4,

“Commercial and Industrial Uses. The following sign standards shall apply to commercial and industrial uses including hotels and motels in any zone. For a commercial or industrial complex containing four (4) or more occupants, the following sign standards apply: A commercial or industrial complex which maintains a group identity shall submit to the Sign Committee a Sign Program for all signs proposed within the complex. Upon approval, the Sign Program shall apply to all tenants. This Sign Program shall be included in the lease for each individual tenant. Proof of said inclusion shall be submitted to the Planning Division by the lessor.”

The Sign Program must meet the purpose and intent of the Sign Regulations and promote good design that will enhance the architecture of the structure or complex. Variation and individuality may be proposed or permitted among the various tenant spaces in a building, but there should be key elements of design or placement that serve to unify the design and maintain the theme of the complex, building or center.

Each tenant in a complex with four or more tenant spaces is allowed a sign area equal to ½ the linear frontage of the building's main entrance. If there are less than four tenant spaces, each is allowed an area equal to the linear street-facing building frontage, or building frontage at the main entrance of each, on a 1:1 ratio. Only one street frontage may be counted, unless the complex has multiple buildings involving several streets.

The Landlord shall provide a copy of the Sign Program to each tenant and it shall state that all new signs must be submitted to the City's Sign Committee for approval and permitting, even if it conforms to the existing Sign Program. The Sign Program shall indicate that Landlord approval is required for new signs submitted for City review, and shall specify the form this will be conveyed to Staff (preferably a signed copy of the plan).

II. SIGN PROGRAM ELEMENTS

There are four elements to a Sign Program: a Site Plan, Building Elevations, Sign Construction Plans, and Sign Specifications for each size and type of sign allowed.

A. SITE PLAN

The site plan should include the following:

1. The entire parcel (or parcels), streets, and all buildings in the complex.
2. The tenant spaces by address or unit/suite number.
3. The main building entrance and all other entrances for each tenant space.
4. The building's main entrance width and the allowed sign area for each tenant space.
5. All proposed locations for signs, showing how they relate to the entrances and streets.

B. BUILDING ELEVATIONS

The building elevations should include the following:

1. All sign location options for each tenant space.
2. The maximum sign area allowed for each tenant space.
3. The maximum letter height allowed for major and minor tenants.

C. SIGN CONSTRUCTION PLANS

The sign construction plans should include the following:

1. In plan and elevation, examples of the type(s) of signs allowed.
2. Details of the bracket and/or mounting method for wall, hanging, and projecting signs.
3. Manufacturer's details (cut sheets) of lighting fixtures and/or electrical lighting plans, when proposed.

D. SIGN SPECIFICATIONS

The sign specifications should include the following for each tenant space:

1. Number of signs allowed
2. Sign area maximum(s)
3. Letter height maximum(s)
4. Letter style(s)
5. Colors and finishes
6. Materials
7. Dimensions (letter height and thickness and/or plaque size and thickness)
8. Bracket style
9. Mounting method
10. Lighting

III. PROCESSING

A. NEW BUILDINGS

1. The full Sign Committee must review a new Sign Program. If some or all of the specifications exceed that allowed under the City Sign Regulations, exception

findings must be made. This includes setting letter height maximums over 12” (10” in EPV), and sign areas larger than allowed by the City Sign Regulations.

2. The Sign Program must be approved before any individual tenant signs are approved for a new building. The Sign Program sets the format for all signs for the building or complex, and any previously approved signs could possibly become non-conforming.
3. The Sign Program and individual tenant signs may not be processed simultaneously. The Sign Program should not indicate individual tenants by name, but should provide a framework for approval of all future tenant signage.
4. After the Sign Committee approves the Sign Program, one copy of the Sign Program is returned to the landlord or his agent, and copies must be made available to all existing and future tenants.

B. EXISTING BUILDINGS

1. Applicability:

This section pertains to situations wherein an existing building undergoes alterations or additions, which alter the number of signs, the locations of the signs, or change the architectural style creating the need for a new or revised Sign Program.

This includes the following:

- a. A multi-tenant building is remodeled to unify the architecture and design elements.
- b. A building, which originally had a single tenant, is subdivided into multiple tenant spaces.
- c. A new building is constructed on a site where an existing building had three or fewer tenants. If the new building results in the creation of a unified center or complex, a Sign Program is required, even though the existing building has existing signs.
- d. The sale of a property causes the information contained in the existing Sign Program to become outdated.
- e. A building or complex is remodeled and the changes render the existing Sign Program obsolete.
- f. Additional sign locations are proposed creating the need for a revised Sign Program.

2. Processing New Sign Programs & Program Updates:

- a. The Landlord may submit an application for a Sign Program while a separate application for the building alteration/addition is being processed.
- b. If the building alteration/addition occurs prior to establishing a Sign Program, the first new application for a sign may be processed, but the property owner will be informed in writing that no further sign applications will be processed until a current Sign Program is in place.
- c. Revisions to the Sign Program may be submitted by the Landlord or by his or her Agent with the Landlord’s written approval.
- d. The new or revised Sign Program will apply to all incoming new tenants. The existing signs will be legal non-conforming to the Sign Program and

must be brought into compliance with the Sign Program when any changes to the non-conforming signs are proposed.

C. NEW AND EXISTING BUILDINGS – PROCESSING FUTURE TENANT SIGNS FOLLOWING SIGN PROGRAM APPROVAL

1. An application for individual tenant signs that conforms to the program and to the City Sign Regulations may be reviewed as Conforming Signs.
2. When a Sign Program has been approved with the necessary exception findings to allow excess letter height or sign area for specified tenants and the subsequent tenant application conforms to the Sign Program, the applicant does not have to return to the full Sign Committee for exception findings and does not have to pay exception fees.